

REMARKS

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1, 2, 5-7 and 21-30 will be pending in the application. This amendment is submitted in conjunction with a Request for Continued Examination. In an office action mailed June 15, 2005, the pending claims were finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent number 6,389,400 to Bushey, et al. ("Bushey") in view of U.S. patent publication number 2001/0054064 to Kannan ("Kannan"). By this paper, claims 1 and 21 are amended and new claims 27-30 are added. Reconsideration of claims 1, 2 and 5-7 and 21-30 is respectfully requested.

Reconsideration of the rejection of independent claims 1 and 21 is respectfully requested. Claim 1 has been amended to recite

automatically calculating a customer value for the customer based on historical customer interaction information including previous activities, purchases, or accounts of the customer recorded as transaction records for previous transactions between the customer and the customer interaction center over all possible channels ...

Claim 21 has been amended similarly. It is respectfully submitted that these amendments overcome the final rejection of claims 1 and 21 and that Bushey and Kannan, taken alone or in combination, do not include all the limitations of claims 1 and 21 as amended.

The final office action at page 4 refers to Bushey, column 9, lines 4-7 (calculation of a customer model) as disclosing calculation of a customer value but acknowledges that "Bushey, et al. does not disclose customer score based on historical customer interaction information recorded as transaction records for previous transactions between the customer and the customer interaction center over all possible channels." The office action however relies on Kannan to supply the missing teaching, referring to Kannan ¶0080 and ¶0084.

However, Kannan actually discloses determining if a customer qualifies for live service based on status, i.e., is the customer a "new" customer" or a "known" customer. This is done "by evaluating whether (i) a customer logged on using a known account number or other forms

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of identification or whether (ii) data in the computer supporting customer browser 520 exists that verifies that the customer is a known entity.” Bushey does show that archived customer account information may be retrieved, column 8, lines 47-55, but Kannan discloses making customer service decisions based on current browsing activity, . (Kannan ¶0080).

Claims 1 and 21 have been amended to clarify that in the method and system according to the present invention, the customer value is based on “previous activities, purchases, or accounts of the customer recorded as transaction records for previous transactions.” Support for this amendment is found at page 18, lines 3-5. Thus, instead of “current browser activity” or simply the “new” versus “known” status of the customer, the presently claimed system and method go further and look to the substance of past contact with the customer. Only if the substance of this contact is sufficient (i.e., exceeding a predetermined customer value threshold), is the customer offered the full range of interaction options for customer service. These limitations are missing from Bushey and Kannan and not described or suggested by either reference.

With this response, the application is submitted to be in condition for allowance. Should the examiner deem a telephone conference to be of assistance is advancing the application to allowance, the examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,



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